



Meeting Summary Notes

Date Produced:	June 16, 2008
Meeting:	Central Arizona Framework Study Regional Technical Advisory Team, Meeting No. 2
Date:	June 12, 2008
Location:	Florence Fire Department, Training Room 72 E. 1st Street
Purpose:	The purpose of the meeting was to present and discuss information pertaining to Working Paper No. 2, Population and Employment Projections, Critical Needs, and Potential Projects.

Participants:

Jerry Barnes, ADOT Globe District
Alton Bruce, City of Coolidge
Doug Hansen, Pinal County
Andy Smith, Pinal County
Bill Leister, Central Arizona Association of Governments
Paul Tober, City of Casa Grande
Sasha Pachito-Saliego, Gila River Indian Community
Giao Pham, City of Apache Junction
Reza Karimvand, ADOT Tucson District
Michelle, Green, Arizona State Land Department
Fred Stevens, Tohono O'odham Nation
Mark Thompson, Town of Florence
Mark Young, Town of Queen Creek
Mark Eckhoff, Town of Florence
Carter McKune, ADOT Tucson District (Casa Grande)
Robert Young, Pima County
Keith Betsuie, City of Maricopa
Dianne Kresich, ADOT Multimodal Planning Division
Terri Kennedy, ADOT Multimodal Planning Division
James Marino, ADOT Multimodal Planning Division
Dave Perkins, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Brent Crowther, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
John McNamara, DMJM Harris
Ethan Rauch, DMJM Harris

The following meeting notes are intended to be a summary of the discussions at the meeting. Any changes or corrections to the meeting summary notes must be received by the author within ten days. After that date, they will be final.

The meeting was called to order by Dianne Kresich.



Introductions

Dianne welcomed attendees to the meeting. The RTAT members introduced themselves.

Review of Completed Activities

Stakeholder interviews were completed in February and March 2008. Focus group meetings were held in Florence and Globe to receive stakeholder input on commercial and multimodal transportation, environmental, and business and development. Common themes from the Florence community workshop were that growth is a reality and that new transportation routes are needed. In Globe, attitudes toward growth were mixed -- existing communities do not want to be bypassed and their economies consequently damaged. In Globe, participants generally agreed that there is not enough land to develop and that land exchanges are important for economic development. The preservation of local character and history is important, as is, tribal coordination between Eastern and Central frameworks.

General themes from focus groups were: consider impact of growth on transportation, transportation is often an afterthought, local and regional transit should be considered, and the protection of natural resources is important.

Working Paper No. 2 – Existing and Future Conditions (Final) was distributed electronically to the RTAT in advance of the meeting. WP2 did not include modeling. Modeling and population/employment projections will be included in Working Paper No. 3 / 4.

Working Paper No. 3 / 4 will also include alternative transportation scenarios. Each scenario will be multimodal and will include both local and state facilities. Evaluation criteria under development by the Management Consultant will include smart growth principles. Alternative scenarios will be developed and then presented to the RTAT in the fall. Alternatives will be evaluated and a preferred scenario selected. However, public meetings regarding the scenarios will not be held until after the November election. After that, a preferred alternative scenario will be identified based on travel demand modeling, the evaluation criteria, and community/stakeholder input. The Central Framework Study will not evaluate and prioritize individual projects.



Population, Employment, and Modeling

Brent Crowther (filling in for Brent Cain) presented population and employment information. Gila County population estimates and projections are being revised from those presented at the May 29 webinar.

Pinal County is projected to grow to 1.3 million people in 2030 and to 2.2 million people in 2050. Gila County is projected to grow to 70,000 people in 2030 and 78,000 people in 2050. Pinal County population is projected to increase by 375% between 2005 and 2030, and employment by 1,236%.

Issues and questions raised by RTAT members are listed below.

- Why is there such a big difference between DES and bqAZ estimates for population?
- DES is not the correct reference. The Arizona Department of Commerce is now responsible for population projections.
- A difference was noted between the population-to-employment ratio for Pinal County (as presented) and the ratio from the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan study (4.1).
- It was noted that the projected employment in Pinal County is not realistic but is nevertheless being used for planning purposes.

Critical Needs

John McNamara provided an update of the statewide critical needs effort. He reviewed several challenges to transportation finance in Arizona, including:

- Construction costs are up 60% over the last five years.
- Federal and state fuel tax revenues have been steadily eroding.
- Within the next few years, outside Maricopa and Pima counties (which have dedicated funding sources for multimodal transportation improvements), ADOT will be able to focus only on transportation system maintenance unless an additional funding source is secured.

The purpose of the critical needs effort was to develop a tool to initiate discussions on transportation finance. This effort relied primarily on existing planning and programming to identify critical and representative needs, and their order-of-magnitude cost, for a 2030 planning horizon .

The study initially identified \$165 billion in critical needs, including \$110 billion for state highways, \$25 billion for public transit (including rail passenger service), and \$30 billion in local needs. A ballot initiative that would be expected to generate approximately \$42.5 billion over 30 years



through a one-cent sales tax has been filed by the TIME Coalition. Signature collection for the initiative is currently underway.

The recommended investment strategy allocates 58 percent to highway projects, 18 percent to transit projects, 20 percent to local mobility projects, and 4 percent to enhancement projects (such as bicycle and pedestrian improvements).

An RTAT member asked why the ADOT District Engineers were requested to provide a list of all needs, including maintenance and operations. John McNamara stated that the \$165 billion in needs includes all of these categories. In addition, the proposed \$42.5 billion investment strategy includes funding to maintain new roadways.

The State Transportation Board is currently holding public hearings on the investment strategy. Some adjustments to the needs list could still be made before the State Transportation Board vote scheduled for June 19 in Tucson. Pinal County is preparing an alternative list of projects for consideration.

Round Table of Potential Projects

Dave Perkins led a round table discussion of potential projects that have been identified for the Central Region. A list of projects was distributed for discussion purposes. The list should be considered draft and in progress. Comments on the list included:

- Projects that extend beyond the Central Region should be noted as requiring inter-regional coordination.
- Buses and bus rapid transit should be included.
- Superstition Vistas and the Tribal Needs Study should be reviewed and incorporated appropriately.
- SR 87 should be added to the list of freight corridors.
- Eloy SATS, Casa Grande SATS, Apache Junction SATS, and the Pinal County RSR should be reflected in the list.
- River crossings should be considered.
- Projects to facilitate emergency evacuation should be considered.
- Other aviation facilities (in addition to Coolidge) should be added to the list. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport should not be overlooked. The aviation section to the Pinal County Comprehensive Plan is being updated.
- Draft versions of the list of potential projects should be dated and stamped as draft.



An RTAT member asked whether there is a mechanism to prioritize projects and needs. John McNamara stated that they will not be prioritized within the Framework Study process, but may be prioritized as part of the Statewide Transportation Plan update.

Next Steps

- Evaluation criteria are under development.
- Travel demand modeling is proceeding.
- A framework for alternative scenarios is being developed.
- Stakeholder interviews will proceed in the fall.
- Public open houses will be held following the November election.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

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Attachments:

Statewide and Regional Transportation Planning Framework, RTAT 2
PowerPoint Presentation

Statewide Transportation Investment Strategy, PowerPoint Presentation